



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

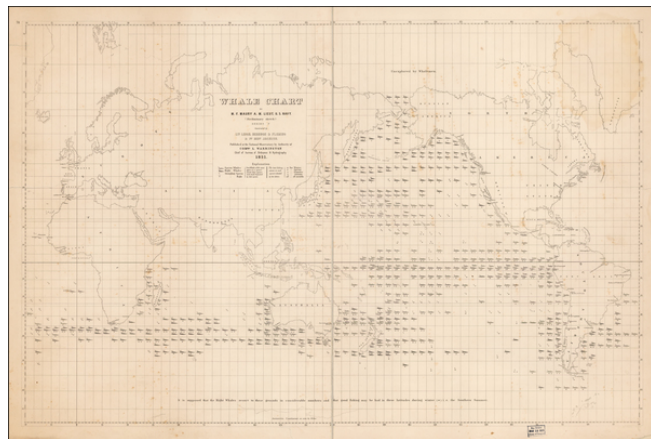
7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Whale Chart By M.F. Maury A.M. Lieut. U.S. Navy . . . 1851

Stock#: 47604
Map Maker: Maury
Date: 1851
Place: New York
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG
Size: 24.5 x 37.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

A Whaling Chart of Monumental Importance

Rare Whale Chart, issued by the United States Bureau of Ordnance & Hydrography in 1851 and lithographed by Endicott in New York.

Shows best fishing areas and migration patterns for sperm whales and right whales, as well as the most densely populated areas and areas of "Stragglings" Sperm Whales and Right Whales.

As noted by Eric J. Dolan in *Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America*:

In the mid-1800s, Maury, who has been called the father of oceanography and the "pathfinder of the seas," launched a major effort to map the world's oceans, the main goal being improved navigation by identifying the quickest routes for commercial and naval mariners to get where they were going. Rather than rely on government-sponsored explorations to supply this information, Maury, who was at the time the head of the navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments, distributed specially designed logbooks and asked mariners to keep a daily record of the weather, winds, currents, and water temperatures they encountered on their trips, and then return the logbooks to him so that he and his staff could mine them for data to construct the maps.

One of the main reasons so many mariners aided Maury in his quest was because of the quid pro quo he offered. You provide me the data, Maury said, and I will provide you with maps that will help you do your jobs better. Maury was especially keen on getting whalers to participate because he knew they traveled more widely than any other mariners and that they



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Whale Chart By M.F. Maury A.M. Lieut. U.S. Navy . . . 1851

kept particularly detailed logs of the weather and ocean conditions. And Maury could use the whalemens dedication to recording where they saw whales to glean further information on water temperatures by employing the crude but powerful relationship that sperm whales tend to swim in warmer waters, while right whales preferred the cold. In return for the whalemens participation, Maury promised to supply them with charts that showed "at a glance" where the whales "have been most hunted; --when, in what years, and in what months it has been most frequently found--whether in shoals, as stragglers; -- and whether sperm or right."

Numerous mariners . . . sent Maury logs from which he and his team produced more than seventy charts, including track charts, trade-wind charts, pilot charts, thermal charts, and storm and rain charts. But the chart that excited the whalerman was, of course, the whale chart, which, Maury proudly proclaimed, "cannot fail to prove of great importance to the whaling interests of the country, --an interest . . . which fishes up annually from the depths of the ocean, in real value of which far exceeds that of the gold mines in California." As he had promised, Maury sent his whalermen contributors copies of the chart, and they couldn't have been happier. "The Whale Chart," one whaling captain effused, "is a precious jewel; it seems to have waked up the merchants and masters to the practical utility of your researches in their behalf; there is not, and cannot be but one opinion, and that highly favorable: it is sought for by all interested in whaling."

Provenance: Warren Heckrotte Collection.

Detailed Condition:

Two sheets, laid on linen. Minor soiling and dampstaining. Several marginal tears at left, extending into printed image and one on right side. Ex-Library of Congress Collection.